

Red Pine Scholars Program | 2026-27 Guidelines

The Red Pine Scholars Program is seeking its next class of students from low- to middle-income families in Massachusetts who have demonstrated academic excellence and are planning to attend competitive colleges as freshmen in the Fall of 2026. This program is designed to support students through tuition assistance, mentoring, and other flexible financial supports. The Red Pine Scholars Program is dedicated to making college affordable for Massachusetts families and helping students reach their full potential. The program is funded by an anonymous donor and administered by The Philanthropic Initiative (TPI).

In addition to the eligibility criteria listed in the checklist below, selection criteria are based on the following key components:

- Student's potential for academic success and college choice will allow them to accomplish career goals and achieve financial stability
- Student faces challenging financial circumstances
- Student demonstrates strong character and the ability to positively contribute to the Red Pine Scholars community

Program Components

<i>Scholarship:</i>	A four-year, renewable, last dollar scholarship of up to \$25,000 per year to a competitive four-year undergraduate college in the United States. Scholarships typically remain the same year-to-year unless appealed by the student. Note that scholarship amounts vary for each student, and awardees may still have subsidized and/or unsubsidized loans and federal work study eligibility included in their financial aid package.
<i>Advising:</i>	Each student is paired with an adult mentor to provide advice and assistance navigating the college experience.
<i>Flexible Funds:</i>	Additional funds are available to students to support enriching experiences that help students achieve their academic goals or to assist with expenses related to unforeseen circumstances.
<i>Events:</i>	Red Pine hosts a series of at least three events each year to bring all students together for community building, professional skill building, and college preparation.

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Eligibility Guidelines

Residency:

- US citizens and non-citizens are welcome to apply. Students must be able to prove their financial need for the scholarship via tax documents or enrollment in government support programs, and/or by filling out the FAFSA.
- Permanent resident of Massachusetts

Financial circumstances:

- Adjusted gross family income (AGI) of \$110,000 or less (as shown on your most recent tax returns)
- Substantial unmet need (at least \$5,000) as determined by college financial aid award letter (you will likely not know this at time of application)

Academic:

- Senior at accredited high school in Massachusetts
- Enrolling as a full-time freshman at a four-year college in the U.S. in Fall of 2026 to pursue a Bachelor's degree; academic institution should demonstrate a strong track record of supporting students through graduation and to successful careers
- Strong academic record (enrolled in a demanding, college-prep course of study)

Personal:

- Involved in a balance of community, school, and work activities
- Ability to articulate goals and future plans

Application Process & Timeline

Date	Process milestone or deadline
Thursday, February 12, 2026 by 5:00 pm (EST)	Deadline for All Applications (must be submitted online)
Late March through early April	Semi-finalist interviews
April	TPI works with select semi-finalists and with college financial aid offices to determine unmet need and potential scholarship amounts
<i>Note: Students may submit financial aid award letters from all schools they are considering. Red Pine Scholarship amounts will be determined for each school, allowing recipients to use the information to help them make their final school choice. If a student's unmet need does not exceed \$5,000, they will not be selected as a recipient.</i>	
By April 30	Red Pine Scholarship recipients finalized and decisions announced via email
Mid-August	Fall semester scholarship payments sent to schools

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Application Instructions

Completed applications are due by **Thursday, February 12, 2026 by 5:00 PM (EST)**. Only complete applications submitted online will be reviewed. Please follow instructions carefully. Applicants' ability to follow instructions will weigh into award decisions.

To access the application, click here and either sign in or create a new account:

<https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=redpine>

This scholarship application process may seem daunting, but with the potential to receive up to \$100,000 in college tuition and other benefits over four years, the rewards are well worth the diligent work required to complete the application.

- 1.) **Eligibility:** Prior to completing the application, please be sure you meet all eligibility requirements (academic and financial) outlined above. Ineligible applications will not be reviewed.
- 2.) **Review Application:** Please review the questions and required attachments in advance to be sure you have access to all the information you will need to complete the application. You can review the full application by clicking on the "Question Packet" button at the top right-hand corner of the application page.
- 3.) **Required Attachments:** Instructions on how to submit required attachments are included in the application. PDF and JPEG attachments are accepted.
- 4.) **Two Recommendations:** Make sure you give your recommenders plenty of time to complete the recommendations. Your two recommenders must upload their recommendation letters and complete short forms within the online application. Instructions are included. Only applications with two completed recommendations will be reviewed.

Please note: if you finish your application early, you may submit it before your recommenders have uploaded their materials. However, it is **your responsibility** to follow up with recommenders to make sure they submit letters and forms by the deadline. Applications without two completed recommendations will not be considered.

Questions? Please contact Kira Azulay at redpine@tpi.org or 617-338-5885.

Application Requirements

The following materials are required for the scholarship committee to evaluate each student. Only complete applications submitted online will be considered.

- 1.) **Complete Online Application Form**
- 2.) **Extracurricular & Community Activities:** Applicants will need to enter information about the places they have worked, community service, and leadership activities as part of the online application. Applicants also have the option of uploading their resume.
- 3.) **Recommendation #1 - Teacher/Counselor Letter:** To be written and uploaded by a teacher or guidance counselor. Applicants will have to enter their recommender's email address into the application field in order for the recommender to submit their letter.
- 4.) **Recommendation #2 - General Recommendation:** To be written and uploaded by an adult who has served as a mentor or other important figure in the student's life: for example, a teacher,

work supervisor, community leader, coach, or any other **non-family member** who knows you well. Applicants will have to enter their recommender's email address into the application field in order for the recommender to submit their letter.

- 5.) **Essays:** One long essay and two short answer questions. Essay questions are located within the online application form and may be found on our website. There is no perfect essay response. The essays are an opportunity for us to understand your interests, values, and personality. Please be honest about your experiences, thoughts, and feelings. All essays and short answer questions should reflect **your own** writing and work. You will be asked to attest to this as part of the application.
- 6.) **High school transcript**
- 7.) **Tax forms:** Pages 1 and 2 of parent(s)' or guardian(s)' 2024 or most recent IRS 1040 tax forms. To access your tax forms:
 - a. Contact your tax preparer.
 - b. Request it from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) by doing one of the following:
 - i. Online: Visit <https://www.irs.gov/individuals/get-transcript>. Click "Get a Transcript" and follow the steps to get a transcript online or by mail.
 - ii. By Phone: Call 1-800-908-9946 and follow the prompts.
- 8.) **Complete FAFSA Submission Summary**

Please note: You will be asked to enter your "Adjusted Gross income (AGI)" into your application. If you do not have access to this figure in your FAFSA submission summary, you can find it on line 11 of your 2024 1040 tax form. If your family uses another version of the 1040 form, you can figure out how to find your AGI here:

<https://turbotax.intuit.com/tax-tips/irs-tax-return/how-to-find-your-adjusted-gross-income-agi-to-e-file-your-tax-return/L2BNspAbm>

File your FAFSA as early as possible online. Your Student Aid Index is the amount, determined by the federal government, that you and your family should be able to contribute to your college education annually. Schools use this figure and other financial information to determine what kind of award and loan amounts you will receive. The FAFSA website is www.fafsa.ed.gov. Additional resources about the FAFSA can be found here: <https://www.mefa.org/financial-aid-applications/>